



About 350 volunteers helped build a playground at Merino Park in Providence. The [Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council](#) teamed up with [Staples](#) and [Ka-Boom](#), a non-profit group that has built about 1,400 similar interactive playgrounds around the world. Staples provided \$53,000 to finance the project, and about 300 volunteers to help build it. Friends of the Watershed Council and community residents provided the rest of the muscle. A half-dozen members of the U.S. Attorney's staff were among the volunteers. The job took about six hours.

The Watershed Council is a partner in the U.S. Attorney's Providence [Weed & Seed](#) site, which encompasses Olneyville & Hartford, where Merino Park is located.

"Merino Park's existing playground equipment was extremely limited," said Lisa Aurecchia, program director for the Watershed Council. "With Staples' support we were able to rebuild the park and provide more than 300 neighborhood children with a safer, more vibrant place to play."

The 5,000 square foot playground consists of 23 interactive play elements. Volunteers also built benches and a sandbox, lined the park with barrier fencing, and removed litter and garbage from the surrounding wooded area and from the river.

"It was a rewarding effort," said U.S. Attorney Robert Clark Corrente, who was one of the volunteers. "With no prior experience, a bunch of volunteers was able to construct a playground in one day, and make the park a better place."

Weed & Seed is Department of Justice initiative that combines law enforcement and community enhancement to improve neighborhoods.

